# THE Possibility of Gods Forsaking a people,

That have been visibly near & dear to him

TOGETHER,

*With the Misery of a People thus forsaken,*

Set forth in a

# SERMON,

Preached at *Weathersfield*, Nov. 21. 1678. Being a Day of FAST and HUMILIATION.

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By Mr. *Joseph Rowlandson* Pastor of the Church of Christ there. Being also his last SERMON, but 2 Days before he Died. (Pref.)

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2 Chron. 15. 2. *The Lord is with you, while ye be with him, and if ye seek him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.*
Hos. 9. 12. *Wo also to them, when I depart from them.*

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To the Courteous READER, (especially the Inhabitants of the Town of *Weathersfield*, and *Lancaster*, in *New-England*.

*GOds forsaking of such as he hath been near to, is a thing of such weight, and solemnity, and hath such bitter effects, that it is a meet Subject, (especially in a dark and mourning day) for Ministers to speak to, and for People to hear of: that the one may warn of the danger, and the other avoid the judgement. As Gods presence is the greatest glory to a People on this side Heaven, so his absence is the greatest misery on this side hell; this therefore must needs be a concerning point, to such as will concern themselves in their concernments. The ensuing* Sermon *will appear a solemn word, if duely considered: the subject matter is very solemn and weighty; (Treating of Gods being with, or forsaking a people) the time when it was delivered was a solemn time, (a day of* FAST *throughout the Colonies) the Reverend* Author *that Composed, and Preached it; was one solemn and serious above many others, and that which adds one great circumstance to its solemnity, is, in that it was the last word he spake to the*

world, being but about two dayes before he left it. As it is ſolemn, ſo 'tis ſeaſonable, and pertinent. It is a time wherein we have given God juſt cauſe to forſake us, a time wherein God is threatning to forſake us. A time wherein God hath in ſome meaſure forſaken us already, and what can be more ſeaſonable, then to ſhew the evils that befall a forſaken People, that we may yet be awakened, and return, that the Lord do not forſake us utterly.

As for the Reverend Author, there needs nothing to be ſaid in his commendation, he was known amongſt the Churches in the Wilderneſs, and known to be a workman that needed not to be aſhamed. That his Name (which was ſometimes precious amongſt thoſe that knew him) may not be forgot, and that being dead, he may yet ſpeak to a land that have in ſome meaſure forſook their God, and are in danger of being forſaken, is the ground-work of the publiſhing this ſmall part of his labours. It is commended eſpecially to the peruſal of the Inhabitants of Lancaſter and Weathersfield: He was a Man well known to you, the one had his Life, and the other his death; and both his loſs, you cannot eaſily forget his name, and 'tis deſired that you may not forget the labour and travel, he hath had amongſt you; the word which he Preached to you was acceptable whilſt he was living, and it is preſumed it will be accepted with the like candor now he is dead. Indeed had it been intended, and fitted by himſelf for the Preſs, you might have expected, and found it more

large

*large, and polished; but as it is, it is thought fit not to be lost, and may be of great use, and benefit, to open to us the danger of forsaking God, to humble us for all our coolings, and declinings from God, to quicken us in our return to, and close walking with God, and that it may attain this end, is the hearts desire, and prayer of him, who abundantly wishes thy welfare, and prosperity in Christ Jesus.*

*B. VV.*

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Jeremiah

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# Ieremiah 23. 33.

*And when this People, or the Prophet, or a Prieſt, ſhall aſk thee, ſaying, what is the burden of the Lord? thou ſhalt then ſay unto them, what burden? I will even forſake you, ſaith the Lord.*

IN the Words, there lies before us, (*Firſt*) A Queſtion, ſuppoſed, to be propounded, wherein there is two things: 1. The Queſtioniſts, this People, or a Prophet, or a Prieſt: 2. The Queſtion it ſelf, or the matter of it, *What is the burden of the Lord?* (*Secondly,*) There is an Anſwer, and a ſolemn Anſwer too, which is put into his mouth by the Lord, and which he is to return as the Lords Anſwer to the Queſtion? *thou ſhalt then ſay unto them, what burden? I will even forſake you, ſaith the Lord.*

In which Anſwer there is three things.

1. An expreſſion of Indignation, *What burden?*

2. An assertion by way of Answer to the question, *I will forsake you.*

3. A Seal of ratification, in the last words, *Saith the Lord.*

God having before dealt with the Pastors, that did destroy, and scatter the flock, as in the beginning of the Chapter, *Wo be to the Pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture*, & ver. 2 *I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord, and also with the false Prophets, that prophesied lies in his Name*, as ver. 9. *My heart within me is broken because of the Prophets*, & ver. 32. *Behold I am against them, that prophesie false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to erre by their lies, and by their lightness:* which sort of Prophets went without their Commission, as *ver.* 21. *I have not sent these Prophets yet they ran.* He proceeds from the head Rulers, to the people that were seduced by them: for by this means their hands were strengthened in sin, so as that they did not return from their wickedness, as *ver* 14. It was a usual thing for the Prophets of the Lord, to begin their Sermons (the matter whereof was minatory, wherein the Lord threatned them with just judgements) with that Phrase, *the burden of the Lord*, as will easily appear if you consult, *Isai.* 13. 1. & 15. 1. & 22 1. & 30. 6. Now they do in the words of the Text, or are supposed in mockery to demand, what *Burden* he had from the Lord, for them.

For

For the opening of the words, And: or moreover becauſe he here enters upon new matter: *this People*, or the prophane ſort of them, whom the falſe Prophets had ſeduced, to which he joyns the Prophet, and the Prieſt, in that they were alike prophane, as *ver.* 11. *for both Prophet and Prieſt are prophane, yea in my houſe*, ſaith the Lord: and when Prophets are prophane there is wont to be a pack of them, as *Jer.* 5.31. *The Prophets propheſies falſly, and the Prieſts bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it ſo*: ſhall ask thee ſaying, *viz.* in a deriding way, not out of a holy end, or deſire, *What is the burden of the Lord? or from the Lord?* ſo were the Propheſies ſtiled, that contained in them, *Threatnings, Judgements, and Plagues*, 2 King. 9.25. as if they had ſaid, *what haſt thou further miſchief in thy head to declare? further Woes and Threatnings to pronounce? haſt thou nothing elſe to propheſie, but Miſchief and Calamity? What is the burden now?* Thou ſhalt then ſay unto them, the Lord knew what they would ſay to him, and tells him what he ſhould ſay, by way of reply, *What burden?* a retorting by way of holy indignation; ask ye indeed *what burden?* and that in a way of deriſion? are you of that ſtrain, and ſpirit? I will even forſake you ſaith the Lord: a burden heavy enough, and you are like to feel it ſo ere long, heavy enough to break your Backs, to break your Church, and your Common wealth, and to

ſink

ſink your haughty Spirits, when this Burden ſhall come upon you, in its force and weight.

Doct. *That the Lord may even forſake a People that have been near to him, and he hath been near to, though for the Lord thus to do, is as fearful and hideous a judgement as can be inflicted on any People.*

The Doctrine is double, it hath two parts:
*Firſt*, That the Lord may do thus.
*Secondly*, When he doth, it is a very ſad and heavy burden. It may be proſecuted as two diſtinct points.

P. 1. 1. God may forſake a People that hath been near to him, and that he hath been near to. This may be ſpoken to in this order.

1. What is meant by Gods forſaking a People.
2. How may it appear that God may forſake, even ſuch a People as the point ſpeaks of?
3. The Reaſons.
4. The uſe.

1. 1. What doth Gods forſaking mean? what is intended thereby?

*Sol.* It means Gods withdrawing himſelf, as the Prophet *Hoſea* phraiſes it, *Hoſ.* 5. 6. *They ſhall go with their Flocks and their Herds to ſeek the Lord, but ſhall not find him, he hath withdrawn himſelf from them.* They ſhall ſeek him, and not find him, and there is a good reaſon, he hath with-

withdrawn himself, he is gone, in respect of his gracious presence. We must here distinguish betwixt Gods general presence, and his precious presence. In respect of his general presence, he is not far from any one of us, *for in him we live, and move, and have our being*, *Act.* 17.27,28. We have not only our beginning from, but our being in him. As the beam hath its being in the Sun. Of this general presence of God, we read, *Psal.* 139. 7. There is no flying from it. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flie from thy presence?* In this sense God is every where, as it is *ver.*8, & 9. *If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there.* He fills Heaven and Earth, and there is no hiding from him, *Jer.*23.24. *Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him,? saith the Lord do not I fill Heaven and Earth? saith the Lord.* He hath Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his Footstool, as it is, *Isai.*66.1. This general presence of God, if believingly apprehended, and strongly believed, might be of great use.

But it is not this general presence that is meant: but his especial presence, his favourable and gracious presence, the removing whereof, is that that is intended, by the forsaking that the Text and Point speaks of. God is said to forsake a People two waves.

1. As to Affection.
2. As to Action.

1. As to Affection, when he diſcontinues his love to them, when he takes away his love from a people, then he takes his leave of a people. *My mind is not toward this people*, Jer. 15. 1. a very heavy Judgement, and ſad removal. Be inſtructed O *Jeruſalem, leaſt my Soul depart from thee.*

2. As to Action, when God takes away the ſigns of his preſence.

1. When he takes away merciful and gracious providences, when he carries not towards them as he was wont to do: but vexes them with all manner of adverſity, *Deut.* 31. 17. *I will forſake them, and many evils and troubles ſhall befal them*: when he ceaſes to protect them from evils, and enemies, as in times paſt, and provides not for them, as he was wont to do. 2. When he takes away his Ordinances, and bereaves a people of the glorious things of his houſe; or take away his ſpirit from accompanying them, whereby the glory ceaſes, and the ordinances are rendered in effectual for the ſaving good of a people.

II. 2. How may it appear that God may forſake ſuch a People?

It may appear by what God hath threatned. What God hath threatned, to ſuch as the point ſpeaks of, may be inflicted on them: but God hath threatned ſuch judgements to ſuch a people. My anger ſhall be kindled againſt them,

and

and I will forſake them, as near as they are to me, and as dear as they have been to to me, *Deut.* 31. 17. Many ſuch threatnings are found in the Scripture againſt *Iſrael*, who are ſtiled a people near unto him.

In that ſuch as have been near to God, and he near to them, have complained of their being forſaken by God. Thou haſt forſaken us, is one of the bitter moans, on record, that the Church of God did often make unto him.

What God hath inflicted on ſuch, may be inflicted on ſuch again; what God hath done to ſome, he may do to others, in the ſame ſtate, and relation: for he is unchangeable. Thoſe that were once the only peculiar people of God, near to God, and had God near to them, yet what is is their condition at this day? A forſaken condition, is the condition, of the Off-ſpring of *Abraham* Gods Friend, a ſeed whom he had choſen, and hath been ſo, for above ſixteen hundred years. God hath been angry with them, and forſaken them, as they were foretold long ago. How is it with the Churches of *Aſia*, that were once famous golden Candleſticks? that had Epiſtles written to them. Are they not in a forſaken condition? not the face of a Church to be found amongſt them.

In that they may do that, which may deſerve a forſaking, therefore they may do that which may actually procure it. They may do that

which

which may deſerve a forſaking, they may through the corruption and unbelief of their hearts forſake God, and God may in juſt judgement retaliate, and thereupon forſake them. This is ſpoken to in the forequoted place, *Deut.* 31. 16, 17. *They will forſake me, and break my Covenant which I have made with them: then my anger ſhall be kinaled againſt them in that day, and I will forſake them, and hide my face from them.* So again, 2 Chron. 15. 2. *But if you forſake him he will forſake you*; the firſt is ſuppoſed, *if you forſake him*, the latter is impoſed, *he will forſake you:*

III. But why doth the Lord forſake ſuch a People? The Reaſons:

1. To ſhew that he hath no need of any, he hath forſaken many, and may forſake many more, to ſhew that he hath no need of any. God would have all the world to take notice, (that though all men have need of him, yet) he hath no need of any man.

2. To teſtifie his Sanctity, and ſeverity againſt ſin. He will not ſpare them, that have been near him, if they will not ſpare their ſin for him. He is a holy God, and if they will have their ſins, and their luſts, and their wayes, and their lovers, he will vindicate his holineſs, by inflicting this judgement on them.

3. To be a warning to all that enjoy his gracious preſence. That they ſee that they make much of it, and that they take heed that they

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do not ſin againſt him, and forſake him, and provoke him to forſake them alſo.

*Caut.* The point is to be underſtood of a people that are viſibly and externally near and dear to him, and theſe may be totally and finally forſaken of God: and yet here it muſt be noted, that God may exerciſe a deal of patience, and forbearance toward ſuch as he is about to forſake, he did ſo with the old world, he did ſo with the *Iſraelites* of old, he did ſo with the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*: he is not wont ſuddenly, and at once to forſake a people, that have been near and dear to him; but he is wont to give them warning, and in patience to bear a while with their frowardneſs, and wait to ſee if there be any returning to him, before he doth inflict this heavy and ſharp judgement.

*Uſe* It ſerves to admoniſh us, not to bear our IV
ſelves too high, upon the account of priviledges. It is a great priviledge to have the Lord near us, and to be near unto him: and ſome lean upon this though they abide in their ſin, *Micah* 3. 10, 11. *They build up Sion with blood, and Jeruſalem with iniquity, yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, is not the Lord amongſt us?* But if our deportment be not according to our priviledges, if we do not carry it thereafter, by becoming an humble, fruitful, and holy people; the Lord will bring forth this heavy burden againſt us, we ſhall be rejected, and forſaken of the Lord, whatever

ever our external priviledges be.

P. 2. But the ſecond part of the Doctrine; or the ſecond Doctrine may be now ſpoken to, *viz.*

*That it is the heavieſt burden, or the ſoreſt of Judgements for the Lord to forſake a people.*

There may be two things ſpoken to in the management of this Truth. 1. Arguments to evidence it. 2. The Uſes of it.

1. If God hath threatned it as a very ſore judgement, then ſure it is ſo. Now when God hath been angry with a people, he hath manifeſted the ſame by menacing them with his forſaking them: when he hath been deſigned to do them a deep diſpleaſure, upon the account of ſome high provocation he is wont to threaten them not by taking away this, or that outward comfort from them, but by taking away himſelf from them.

And that is a woe indeed, a woe with a witneſs, *Hoſ.* 9. 12. Yea, woe alſo to them, when I depart from them: this is the wofulleſt day that ſuch a people are wont to meet with.

2. Gods forſaking a People is a ſore judgement, in that it expoſes them to all judgements. Sin is a great evil in that it expoſes to all evil, this is a great evil of puniſhment, in that it expoſes to all puniſhments. If God be gone, our guard is gone, and we are as a City, in the midſt of Enemies, whoſe walls are broken down. Our ſtrength to make reſiſtance, that's Gone, for God

is

is our ſtrength, as a carcaſe without life, is a prey, to beaſts of prey; ſo are a people forſaken of their God, to all their devouring enemies, and to infernal, and curſed ſpirits: they are expoſed to miſchief, and the malice of all their malignant enemies. When the Lord had forſaken *Jeruſalem*, the *Romans* quickly made a prey of it; when they were deſtitute of God, their habitation became deſolate. There is no Protection to a People, whom the Lord forſakes; but they are perplexed on every ſide.

3. Becauſe the evils that are on ſuch, whom God hath forſaken, they are only evils. The Prophet *Ezekiel* ſometime hath the expreſſion, *Ezek.7.5. Thus ſaith the Lord God, an evil, an only evil behold is come.* This is ſuch an evil, an only evil to a people. An evil whilſt God is preſent, may have much good in it, the Lord may ſanctifie it for abundance of bleſſing: there is hopes of this whilſt the Lord continues amongſt them; but if he be gone, it is an only evil, and the evils that come upon them are ſuch, they have nothing but evil in them.

4. Becauſe no creature can then afford any help; for what can creatures do when God is departed, he makes the creatures uſeful and helpful, but without him they can do us no good, ſtand us in no ſtead: they may ſay to thee as the King of *Iſrael*, ſaid to the Woman, that cried *Help O King*, He anſwered, *If the Lord dont*

*help, whence ſhall I help thee?* all creatures may ſay if God be departed, *we cannot help:* Nay the very Devil cannot help if God be gone: when God departed from *Saul*, he ſought help from the Devil, 1 *Sam.* 28.15. *Wherefore* (ſaith the Devil) *askeſt thou of me? ſeeing the Lord is departed from thee.*

5. It appears to be a ſore judgement, by the anguiſh and diſtreſs, that ſuch have been in, that have been ſenſible that God hath forſaken them. Sin hath flown in the face of ſuch, and terified them: Oh the bleſſed God is gone, and if he is gone, mercy is gone; and Oh for ſuch and ſuch ſins, that lie upon me! what ſhall I do? what a moan have Saints themſelves made in ſuch a caſe? as *David*, Pſal. 22.1,2. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? Why art thou ſo far from helping me? and from the words of my roaring? Oh my God, I cry in the day time, but thou heareſt not, and in the night ſeaſon, and am not ſilent.* Oh how *Saul* roared out his diſtreſs! and that on this account eſpecially, that God was departed from him, not ſo much that the *Philiſtines* were upon him, had not God been gone, he could have dealt well enough with them; but here was the miſery, and the ſting of the miſery, *God was departed from him.*

6 It is a ſore puniſhment, in that it is a great part of the puniſhment of Hell. The eſſential parts of that puniſhment, is pain of loſs, and ſenſe,

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and the former some reckon the greater.

*Use* 1. How foolish are sinners that do even bid God depart from them? as we read, *Job* 21.14. *Therefore they say unto God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* But do they know what they say? O sinners is this your wish? if it be granted it will prove your woe for ever. Happily Gods presence is now your trouble; but I tell you his absence would be your torment.

2. See here what an evil it is to forsake God, is it a judgement of judgements to be forsaken of God? surely then it is the sin of sins to forsake him: the evil of punishment is in being left by God, and the evil of sin is in leaving God. What, forsake God, who is our only good? God who made us, and possest us from our beginning, God that hath been the guid of our Youth, that hath been good to us, and fed us all our dayes? *Jer.* 2. 19. *Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God.* And there is an aggravation of it, *ver.* 17. *Thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way.* As a guid to direct thee, as a staffe to support thee, as a convoy to guard thee, as a Father to provide for thee, that thou hast wanted nothing: well may it be said, *how evil and bitter a thing is it*, that thou hast forsaken the Lord? He adds in the 31. *verse. Oh Generation!* Generation of what? of what you will; God

leaves a ſpace that you may write, what you pleaſe, generation of Vipers, or Monſters, or any thing rather then Generation of Gods people. See ye the word of the Lord, behold your face in that Glaſs. So your cauſleſs apoſtaſies, have I been a wilderneſs unto Iſrael? Have you wanted any thing, Oh ye degenerating crooked, and wilful generation? God may ſay to ſuch ſinners, as *Pharaoh* to *Hadad*, when he would be gone, 1 *King.* 11. 22. *But what haſt thou lacked with me, that thou ſeekeſt to be gone?* what haſt thou lacked ſinner, that thou ſeekeſt to be gone from the Lord? The ſinner muſt anſwer with him, nothing howbeit let me go in any wiſe. He came to him in his diſtreſs, and when his turn was anſwered, away he packs. They forſake becauſe they will forſake.

3. Wonder not that Gods Saints have been ſo ſolicitous with him, not to forſake them. Thus *David*, *Pſal.* 119 8. *Oh forſake me not utterly.* He might well be ſolicitous in this matter, for he underſtood what it was to be forſaken of the Lord. They preſs hard with the Lord whatever he doth he would not leave them, nor forſake them, *Jer.* 14. 9. *Leave us not.* And no wonder, there are ſuch moans, when the Lord may have ſeemed, to have forſaken them.

4. If Gods forſaking be ſo ſore a judgement, it ſhould make us more cautelous, and wary leaſt we pull down this judgement on our heads. Men

ſhould

ſhould be afraid of this heavieſt of judgements, more then the Child of whipping.

5. Let Gods dear ones take heed of concluding againſt themſelves, that they are under this judgement. They are readieſt to couclude againſt themſelves, and yet really in the leaſt danger. Thus we read, *Iſa.* 49. 14. *But Zion ſaid, the Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* But why ſaid *Zion ſo?* it was from diffidence: as Saints do not forſake God as others do, *Pſal* 18.21. *I have not wickedly departed from my God*: ſo God will not forſake them as he forſakes others not utterly forſake them: His forſaking of his is but temporary, and partial.

But here a queſtion may be moved what is the difference betwixt a ſinner forſaken and a Saint forſaken? for the Lord doth not forſake both alike. 1. When God forſakes his own, yet they cry after him, he withdraws himſelf from them ſometimes, yet ſo as that he draws their hearts after him as a mother may hide away from her Child, that it may ſeek and cry the more earneſtly after her. 2 They retain good thoughts of him in his withdrawment, or ablence. As the Spouſe in the Canticles, ſhe calls him her beloved ſtill. As the faithful wife: ſhe retains good thoughts of her husband, and keeps up her reſpect, though he be gone from home but the wicked when the Lord forſakes them, harbour hard thoughts of him. Is this to ſerve the Lord, and walk in his wayes? what good have *I* got by all *I* have done? ſee how he hath ſerved me.

3 They.

3. They will ſeek him, till he return again, when the Lord forſakes others, they will ſeek after vanities, to make up the want of Gods preſence. The Adultreſs in her Husbands abſence, will ſeek after other lovers. The true Saint will be ſatisfied in nothing elſe but the Lord till he return. Moreover there is a difference in Gods forſaking the ſinner and the Saint, when he forſakes the wicked they are left in darkneſs: but when he withdraws from his own he leaves ſome light, whereby they ſee which way he is gone, he leaves ſome glimmering light, by which they may follow after him, and find him.

And again, when he leaves his own, yet his bowels are towards them, *Jer.* 31. 20 *My bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy upon him, ſaith the Lord.* He hath an eye towards them for much good, in his forſaking them.

*Uſe.* 2 Of *Exhortation:* 1. To thankfulneſs to God, for that he hath not yet forſaken us. Whatever he hath ſtript us off, he hath not yet ſtript us off himſelf, he hath not as yet forſaken us. He might have done it, and have done us no wrong; but he hath not yet done it.

2. To do our utmoſt that he may not forſake us. And here there may be added Motives and Means.

1. Conſider Gods lothneſs to forſake us. This is a thing that he is not deſirous of, he doth not willingly afflict us with this ſort of Affliction, or grieve us with this grievous ſtroak. God hath

ſhewed himſelf loth to depart from thoſe that have departed from him; but have warned them of his diſpleaſure, that they might ſtay him. It goes near Gods heart to forſake a People that have been near to him. Methinks I hear him ſaying thus, *How ſhall I give thee up, Oh New-England!* thence ſpeaking to warn us, of our forſakings of him, and to be inſtructed, why? leaſt his Spirit depart from us, *Jer.* 6. 8. *Be thou inſtructed Oh Jeruſalem, leaſt my Soul depart from thee, leaſt I make thee deſolate, a land not inhabited.* You may eaſily ſtay him, the matter is not ſo far gone, but you might yet ſtay him: were we but as loth he ſhould forſake us, as he is to forſake us, he would never leave us. His gradual motions from a people argue his lothneſs, and unwillingneſs to leave them.

2. Conſider what the Lord is to us, or what relation he ſtands in to us, while he is with us. He is our friend, we have found him to be ſo, and a ſpecial friend too: men in the World are not willing to forego a Friend, a good Friend: he is as faithful, skilful, powerful, and tender-hearted a Friend as ever a people had, he ſtuck by us when alſo we had been in a woe caſe, *Pſal.* 124. 1. *If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide may Iſrael now ſay.* And had not the Lord been on our ſide, may *New-England* now ſay. He is a Father, and a tender-hearted Father, *Iſai.* 63. 16, *Doubtleſs thou art our Father.* Can children

be willing their Father ſhould leave them? he is a Husband, *Iſai.*54 5. *For thy Maker is thy Huſband*, a loving, careful, tender husband too; can the Wife be willing to part with her Husband? if the Lord forſake us, we are bereft of our friend, left friendleſs, he is all friends in one, none can be our friend, if he be not. If he leave us, we ſhall be as Orphans, for he is related as a Father, and how ſad is the ſtate of poor Orphans: and we ſhall be in a ſtate of Widow-hood, a very ſolitary, and ſorrowful ſtate. He is our guide, and our pilot; what will become of the blind if their guid leave them? and what will become of the Ship if the Pilot deſert it? thus the Lord is to his, and well may he ſay, as *Mic.* 6.3. *Oh my People what have I done? or wherein have I wearied thee, or given thee any cauſe to be weary of me.*

3. Conſider there are ſhrewd ſigns of Gods intent to leave us, unleſs ſomewhat be done. If you enquire what? I Anſwer:

1. The ſins for which God hath forſaken others are riſe amongſt us. The ſins for which God forſook the Jews, are our ſins.

1. *Horrid Pride*, Hoſ. 5.5. *The Pride of Iſrael doth teſtifie to his face.* Pride in Parts, and pride of Hearts, pride in Apparel, and Veſtures, and in Geſtures, and in Looks, how lofty are their eyes! *New-England* is taken notice of abroad, for as proud a People, of a profeſſing people, as the World affords.

When

When a People are humble the Lord will lay with them. If our immunities, which are Gods mercies, puffe us up, God will empty us: he will blaſt that to us that we are proud of.

2. *Deep and high Ingratitude.* Do you thus requite the Lord? *Deut.* 32.6. So the Prophet *Hoſea* taxes them, *Hoſ.* 2,8. *God gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, ſilver and Gold, but ſhe conſumed them on Baal.* We have been bleſt but hath God had the glory of our bleſſings.

3. *Oppreſſion. Amos* 8.4. *Ye that ſwallow up the needy.* Theſe Jews were like the Fiſhes, the greater did devour the leſs. Some are like wild Beaſts, like Wolves that tear off the fleece, and eat the fleſh of the Flocks. There is more juſtice to be found in hell, then amongſt ſome men on earth: for there is no innocent perſon oppreſſed there.

4. *Wearineſs of Gods Ordinances.* Amos 8.5. *When will the Sabbath be done?* They that are weary of the ſervice of *God*, and the Ordinances of *God*, they are weary of *God*. *God* indeed hath fed us to the full, as to Ordinances: and we are glutted, and ſurfeited, and have loſt our eſteem.

When

When mens Commodities bare but a little price in a place, they will remove the market! if Gospel Ordinances are but a cheap commodity, have loſt their price, and men are weary of them: God will let out his Vineyard to another People. If our mercies become our burdens, God will eaſe us of them.

5. Couſenage in mens dealings, making the Ephah ſmall, and the Shekel great, ſelling the refuſe of Wheat, *Amos* 8. 5, 6. *They pick out the beſt Grain for themſelves, and the refuſe is to ſell.*

6. Idolatry, which is Spiritual Adultery, and is there nothing of this? chuſing of new Gods.

7. Incorrigibleneſs, or oppoſition of a ſpirit of reformation. When God calls to a People to return, by repentance, but they will go on ſtill in their ſin: God calls to them by his judgments, and by his Rod; but they will not hear, as 'tis *Ier.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive Correction: they have made their faces harder than a Rock, they have refuſed to return.* When it is thus with a People, God will pluck up and be gone; ſo *Ier.* 7. 13, 14 *Becauſe they would not hear, and would not anſwer the call of God, I will do to this houſe, as I did to Shiloh,* why? what did the Lord do to Shiloh? ver. 12. *Go to Shiloh, and ſee what I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my People Iſrael.* Go, and view it, and you will ſee what he did, he left tokens of his

his wrath upon them, and forsook them.

2. Another sign of his intent to forsake us, is, in that he is dealing with us as he is wont to deal with them that he is about to forsake. He takes away those that are mostly with him. He will take away his *Moses*'s, those that stand in the Gap, and binds his hands with their Prayers, when he is designed to pour out wrath upon a People: he will remove the lights, when he is about to darken a land. When men send away their Plate and Jewels, and choice things; it intimates their intention of removal

3. Another sign is our Luke-warmness, and Indifferency in Religion: a usual forerunner of its removal. When a People care not for God, and the things of God, he hath left them in some measure, already; and if that Spirit abide he will not tarry long with them.

*Use* 1 Of *Direction.* 1. Examine and humble your selves, for all your departures from God, your forsakings of him; humble your selves for them, confessing with bitterness your evil therein, bemoaning your selves before the Lord upon the account thereof. May the Lord hear his People, from *Dan* to *Beersheba* bemoaning themselves, *Ephraim* like, then the Lord will hear, and have mercy, and not leave us, for his Names sake.

2. Judge your selves worthy to be forsaken, because of your forsaking of him. If you judge

your

your ſelves worthy to be forſaken, God will not judge you worthy to be forſaken, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31.

3. Pray the Lord not to forſake you, the Lord is ſometimes ſtaid with Prayers: Prayers have prevailed with his Majeſty often, and may do again.

4 Forſake your ſins, whereby you have forſaken him. Nothing leſs then this will prevent this miſchief, coming upon us. If there be any, either Son or Daughter that will not leave their ſins for God, God will leave ſuch.

FINIS.

*ERRATA.* In the Preface to Mrs. *Rowlandſons* Narrative Page 1. Line 3. for *Thurſday* read *Tueſday.*